

## Message Text

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65

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAB-01

SAM-01 OMB-01 ACDA-05 /065 W

----- 109896

R 211252Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2380

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 15567

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, IN, PFOR, PK

SUBJ: SHEIKH ABDULLAH ATTACKS PAKISTAN OCCUPATION  
OF AZAD KASHMIR

SUMMARY: A NOW 18 SPEECH BY KASHMIR CHIEF MINISTER  
SHEIKH ABDULLAH THAT PUBLICLY DECLARED PAKISTAN OCCUPIED  
AZAD KASHMIR A PART OF THE INDIAN STATE OF JAMMU AND  
KASHMIR WAS REPORTED BY THE INDIAN PRESS ON NOVEMBER  
19 AND 20. IN HIS SPEECH, THE SKEIKH DENOUNCED  
PAKISTAN'S OCCUPATION OF AZAD KASHMIR. WE BELIEVE THE  
SHEIKH HAD HIS EYE ON THE GROWING POLITICAL COMPETI-  
TION BETWEEN MRS GANDHI'S CONGRESS PARTY AND HIS OWN  
NATIONAL CONFERENCE PARTY AND HIS OBJECTIVE OF HOLDING  
ELECTIONS IN THE STATE IN EARLY 1976. SHEIKH'S  
REMARKS WERE ALMOST CERTAINLY CLEARED BY THE CENSOR  
SINCE ALL WIRESERVICE COPY GOES THROUGH CENSORSHIP.  
WE WILL BE WATCHING TO SEE IF PRESS PLAY OF THE  
SKEIKH'S AZAD KASHMIR THEME WILL BE A "ONE SHOT"  
INCIDENT OR A REPEATED THEME OVER THE UPCOMING WEEKS.  
IF THE LATTER, IT WOULD IMPLY A SIGNIFICANT FALLING  
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OFF FROM THE SIMLA AGREEMENT ON THE INDIAN SIDE.

END SUMMARY.

1. ON NOVEMBER 18, CHIEF MINISTER OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR, SHEIKH ABDULLAH, DENOUNCED PAKISTAN'S OCCUPATION OF AZAD KASHMIR DURING A SPEECH IN JAMMU. ACCORDING TO A BRIEF PTI REPORT CARRIED IN A NUMBER OF DELHI AND REGIONAL DAILIES, THE SHEIKH CHARGED THAT PAKISTAN HAS NO LEGAL OR MORAL RIGHT OVER THE STATE'S TERRITORY WHICH IT HAS BEEN OCCUPYING FOR 28 YEARS. HE IS QUOTED AS ADDING: "HOW CAN PAKISTAN MAINTAIN ITS OCCUPATION OVER THAT LAND WHEN THE RULER OF THE STATE HAD NOT ENTERED INTO ANY AGREEMENT WITH IT IN 1947? AN UNNATURAL TRUCE LINE HAS DIVIDED THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE INTO TWO WINGS BUT THE AREA ACROSS THE LINE MUST COME BACK TO THIS SIDE SO THAT THE KITH AND KIN CAN UNITE AGAIN." THE PTI ARTICLE REPORTS THAT HE THEN SPECIFICALLY ASSERTED THA THE STATE OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR INCLUDING THE TERRITORY BEYOND THE TRUCE LINE IS ONE STATE.

2. COMMENT: TO OUR KNOWLEDGE THIS IS THE FIRST TIME SINCE MID-MARCH THAT THE SHEIKH HAS RAISED THE ISSUE OF AZAD KASHMIR, ALTHOUGH IT IS POSSIBLE THAT CENSORS MAY HAVE CUT ANY SIMILAR REMARKS MADE BY THE SHEIKH SINCE THE EMERGENCY WAS DECLARED ON JUNE 26.

3. IN FEBRUARY-MARCH, PERIODIC PUBLIC REMONSTRATIONS AGAINST PAKISTAN'S OCCUPATION OF AZAD KASHMIR BY THE SHEIKH WERE GENERALLY ATTRIBUTED TO A DESIRE TO SHOW HIS PRO-INDIA BONA FIDES. NOW THE REASONS MAY BE DIFFERENT. ABDULLAH AND HIS NATIONAL CONFERENCE PARTY HAVE BEEN ENGAGED IN A POLITICAL SPARRING MATCH WITH MRS GANDHI'S CONGRESS ORGANIZATION IN KASHMIR, AND HE HAS OPENLY CALLED FOR ELECTIONS IN KASHMIR IN EARLY 1976, ONE YEAR AHEAD OF SCHEDULE. WE BELIEVE HIS PUBLIC STATEMENT MAINLY INTENDED TO SCORE POINTS OVER HIS CONGRESS RIVALS IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR ON AN ISSUE THAT THEY WOULD BE HARD PUT TO CHALLENGE.

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4. THE SHEIKH'S REMARKS WERE ALMOST CERTAINLY CLEARED BY THE CENSOR SINCE ALL WIRESERVICE COPY GOES THROUGH CENSORSHIP. WE FIND THIS SOMEWHAT DISTURBING, AS WE DO THE NON-INTERFERENCE BY THE CENSORS WITH ANTI-US ARTICLES IN THE PRESS. THE GOI WILL KNOW THAT THE SHEIKH'S REMARKS WILL DISTURB THE PAKISTANIS AND PRESUMABLY ELICIT SOME GOP RESPONSE OR INQUIRY. CONCEIVABLY THEIR PUBLICATION MAY

REFLECT THE SAME INDIAN IRRITATION WITH PAKISTAN  
WHICH MEA JOINT SECRETARY CHIB CONVEYED TO EMBOFF  
NOV 18 (NEW DELHI 15343). WE WILL BE INTERESTED IN  
KNOWING WHETHER THERE IS ANY PUBLIC PLAYBACK IN  
PAKISTAN OF THE SHEIKH'S REMARKS, AND WILL WATCH  
CLOSELY HERE TO SEE WHETHER THE AZAD KASHMIR THEME  
WAS A "ONE SHOT" INCIDENT OR IS GOING TO BECOME A  
CONSISTENT THEME IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS, IMPLYING A  
SIGNIFICANT FALLING OFF FROM THE SIMLA AGREEMENT ON  
THE INDIAN SIDE. WE WILL CHECK WITH CHIB IN THE  
NEXT FEW DAYS.  
SAXBE

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, ANNEXATION, SPEECHES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 21 NOV 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** KelleyW0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975NEWDE15567  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750406-0963  
**From:** NEW DELHI  
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**Line Count:** 127  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION NEA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** KelleyW0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 06 AUG 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <06 AUG 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <26 NOV 2003 by KelleyW0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SHEIKH ABDULLAH ATTACKS PAKISTAN OCCUPATION OF AZAD KASHMIR  
**TAGS:** PINT, PFOR, IN, PK, (ABDULLAH, SHEIKH)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006